Evolution creates morality.

**Ruse** (Michael, “Evolutionary Ethics: A Phoenix Arisen,” Zygon, vo!. 21, no. 1, March 1986.)

This is all very well. But, “purely hypothetical situations” are hardly satisfying. Interestingly, as hinted above, Rawls himself suggests that biology might be important. “In arguing for the greater stability of the principles of justice I have assumed that **certain psychological laws are true**, or approximately so. I shall not pursue the question of stability beyond this point. We may note however that one might ask how it is that human beings have acquired a nature described by these psychological principles. The theory of **evolution would suggest that it is the outcome of natural selection**; the capacity for a sense of justice and the moral feelings is an adaptation of mankind to its place in nature” (Rawls 1971, 502-3). This is precisely the evolutionist’s approach. There is no need to suppose hypothetical contracts. **Natural selection made us as we are**. I expect that many traditional philosophers will feel able to go this far with the evolutionist. But now the barriers will come up. The argument will run like this: The evolution of ethics has nothing to do with the status of ethics. I may be kind to others because my biology tells me to be kind to others and because those protohumans who were not kind to others failed to survive and reproduce. But is it right that I be kind to others? Do I really, objectively, truly have moral obligations? To suppose that the story of origins tells of truth or falsity is to confuse causes with reasons. In a Spencerian fashion, it is to jumble the way things came about with the way things really are.l Since Rawls has been quoted as an authority, let us recall what he says at the end of his speculations on the evolution of morality: “These remarks are not intended as justifying reasons for the contract view” (Rawls 1971, 504). This is a powerful response, but today’s evolutionary ethicist argues that it misses entirely the full force of what biology tells us. It is indeed true that you cannot deduce moral claims from factual claims (about origins). However, **using factual claims about origins, you can give moral claims** the only **foundational explanation** that they might possibly have. In particular, the evolutionist argues that, **thanks to** our **science**, **we see that** **claims like “You ought to maximize personal liberty” are no more than subjective expressions, impressed upon our thinking because of their adaptive value**. In other words, we see that morality has no philosophically objective foundation. It is just an illusion, fobbed off on us to promote biological “altruism.” This is a strong claim, so let us understand it fully. The evolutionist is no longer attempting to derive morality from factual foundations. His/her claim now is that there are no foundations of any sort from which to derive morality-be these foundations evolution, Gods will, or whatever. Since, clearly, ethics is not nonexistent, the **evolutionist locates our moral feelings simply in the subjective nature of human psychology**. At this level, morality has no more (and no less) status than that of the terror we feel at the unknown-another emotion which undoubtedly has good biological adaptive value.

Thus the standard is consistency with adaptive value.

Evolution requires retributivism.

**Mackie**, J. L., “Morality and the Retributive Emotions,” Criminal Justice Ethics, 1:1. 1982:Winter/Spring, p.3.)

Suppose that an animal, human or nonhuman, is injured by another, either of the same species or of some other, where the first is able to do some harm to the second which the second can associate with its aggression and perhaps recognize as a reaction to It. Then such retaliation will tend to benefit the retaliator, since the aggressor will be discouraged From repeating the attack. This mechanism can operate either at the psychological level, by negative reinforcement in an individual aggressor, or at a genetic level, where there will be some selective pressure against a kind of aggression that commonly proves harmful to the aggressor. For both reasons **there will** then **be** some **selective pressure in favor of the tendency to retaliate**. This need not be, and originally will certainly not be, the result of calculation and deliberate choke by the reialiator; it is rather that the mechanism of **natural selection mimics calculated, purposive, action. Spontaneous retaliation will thus develop because it is often beneficial**, either immediately or in a longer term, **but it will be spontaneous, not chosen by the retaliator for the sake of the benefit**. Of course, we need not assume that retaliation is always beneficial, as it clearly is not, and we can well admit that what is thus biologically developed is likely to be a “mixed strategy,” a combination of retaliatory tendencies with tendencies, say. to flight or, at least among members of the same species, to conciliation. All that we need is that there should be a retaliatory component in whatever mixed strategy is developed, and it is easy to see why this should be so- And the spontaneous repaying of benefit with benefit may be developed in a corresponding way. Initially **what is thus explained is retributive behavior**, but In creatures that have the capacity for emotion this will naturally be accompanied by the development of retributive emotions directed towards the sources of injury or help. However, these are still only the nonmoral retributive emotions. In order to account for their moral counterparts we must, as Westermarck says, turn to society as the birthplace of the moral consciousness. Among animals that live In social groups, it is easy to explain cooperation in the resentment of injuries. The helping. in this as in other ways. of individuals closely related to an agent will be of direct genetic advantage, of a sort that results in selection In its favor, insofar as close relatives will tend to share the agent’s genes. There can also be selective pressures in favor of reciprocal altruism, the tendency to help those who help the agent in return.’ But what may be most important, especially among human beings, is that cooperative social practices or conventions can crow up by social interaction, A simple model will illustrate this possibility. If two agents will do better in some way it they cooperate, they may begin to do so gradually and tentatively, each making his further cooperative moves conditional upon a favorable response from the other. Such a tentative development of a cooperative practice is easy to describe in terms of a series of conscious choices; but it could equally well grow up more automatically, through agents coming habitually to adopt ways of behaving in relation to one another that tend to help each in whatever pursuits are already established as part of his behavior. Reciprocal sanctioning, the fact that each will be less cooperative if the other ¡s less cooperative, can generate and maintain cooperative conventions even without any series of conscious choices.’° Since cooperation in general is thus explicable, cooperation in resentment can be understood in social animals and particularly in human being; once resentment itself has been explained. And cooperation in resentment is more likely to be useful to those who develop it than cooperation in gratitude: **the repelling of injuries will often require greater concentrations of force than are needed in order to make a worthwhile return for a benefit.**